

Message Text

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17

ACTION ITCF-05

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EA-06 IO-03 DHA-02 ORM-01 VO-01

SCA-01 SSO-00 /034 W
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P R 190515Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3080
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
USMISSION GENEVA

CONFIDENTIAL SINGAPORE 3118

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SREF, CB, BS, SN
SUBJECT: PAROLE PROGRAM FOR CAMBODIAN AND VIETNAMESE--
SINGAPORE

REFS: (A) SINGAPORE 2341; (B) SINGAPORE 2376; (C) SINGAPORE 2228;
(D) STATE 167770; (E) SINGAPORE 2935

1. THERE ARE CURRENTLY 760 REFUGEES ON ST. JOHN'S ISLAND IN SINGAPORE. EMBASSY HAS EITHER ALREADY SUBMITTED OR IS IN THE PROCESS OF SUBMITTING APPROXIMATELY 130 NAMES OF REFUGEES WHO MEET PAROLE CRITERIA. (SEE REF A AND REF B) IN ADDITION, EMBASSY HAS SUBMITTED NAMES OF 69 PERSONS WHO WERE PICKED UP BY AMERICAN - FLAG VESSEL AND ARE CURRENTLY ON ST. JOHN'S ISLAND. (DEPARTMENT HAS ALREADY AGREED THAT USG WILL ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR RESETTLEMENT. SEE REF C) IF ALL THESE REFUGEES PROVE ELIGIBLE TO ENTER U.S., THIS WILL LEAVE A TOTAL OF 561 REFUGEES REMAINING ON ST. JOHN'S ISLAND IN SINGAPORE. IN ADDITION, THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 250 VIETNAMESE AND

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CAMBODIAN "REFUGIES SUR PLACE" WHO WERE STRANDED OR LIVING

IN SINGAPORE FOLLOWING THE COLLAPSE OF INDOCHINA. UNHCR IS ALSO ATTEMPTING TO RESETTLE THIS GROUP.

2. BELIEVE FOR TIME BEING IT IS BEST FOR U.S. TO LEAVE IT UP TO UNHCR TO APPROACH GOS CONCERNING ARRANGEMENTS FOR ULTIMATE RESETTLEMENT OF REMAINING REFUGEES. VISITING UNHCR EXECUTIVES FROM GENEVA (JAEGER AND RIZVI) BRIEFED ME ON JULY 18 ON THEIR LENGTHY DISCUSSION THIS SUBJECT WITH MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS CHUA SIAN CHIN AND DID NOT FEEL DISCOURAGED BY HIS RESPONSE. THEY SAID MINISTER GHUA WAS VERY CONCERNED ABOUT SLOW MOVEMENT IN RESETTLING REFUGEES FROM SINGAPORE. HOWEVER, MR. JAEGER SAID HE EXPLAINED UNHCR PAST SUCCESS IN RESETTLEMENT AND FELT HE HAD CONVINCED CHUA THAT WHILE PROCESS MIGHT BE SLOW UNHCR WOULD SUCCEED IN RESETTLING THESE REFUGEES. JAEGER WAS PLEASED THAT GOS HAS FINALLY AGREED TO SIGN EXCHANGE OF LETTERS, COVERING UNHCR OPERATION IN SINGAPORE.

3. UNHCR REPS CONCLUDED FROM THEIR MEETING WITH MINISTER CHUA THAT AS LONG AS THERE WAS CONTINUING MOVEMENT OF REFUGEES OUT OF SINGAPORE GOS WOULD NOT TAKE DRASTIC ACTION TO EXPEL REFUGEES (SUCH AS REQUIRING REFUGEES TO LEAVE BY BOAT) AS IT DID IN EARLY MAY. ASSUMING U.S. WOULD CONTINUE TO TAKE ALL OR VIRTUALLY ALL OF REFUGEES FALLING WITHIN ESTABLISHED PAROLE CRITERIA, UNHCR REPS WERE CONFIDENT UNHCR COULD GRADUALLY RESETTLE REMAINDER. HOWEVER, THE IMPORTANT THING WAS TO SHOW MOVEMENT. THEREFORE THEY SAID IT IS ESSENTIAL U.S. MOVE ITS 200 CASES OUT OF SINGAPORE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. FRENCH HAD ALREADY TAKEN ABOUT 100 REFUGEES FROM ST. JOHN'S AND HAD BEEN VERY HELPFUL IN ACCEPTING SIGNIFICANT NUMBERS OF VIETNAMESE SEAMEN STRANDED IN SINGAPORE, VIETNAMESE AND CAMBODIAN DIPLOMATS AND OTHER "REFUGIES SUR PLACE." CANADIANS HAD ALREADY TAKEN SOME, AND UNHCR WAS HOPEFUL ON BASIS OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION THAT AUSTRALIA WOULD TAKE A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER. IF NUMBER OF REFUGEES COULD BE REDUCED TO 200 - 300 BY DECEMBER, UNHCR REPS WERE CONFIDENT GOS WOULD LET THIS REMAINDER STAY ON A WHILE LONGER. THEY FELT THERE WAS EVEN A POSSIBILITY THAT GOS MIGHT ACCEPT IN SINGAPORE ANOTHER 20 OR 30 REFUGEES IN ADDITION TO THE 110 FISHERMEN IT HAS ALREADY TAKEN.

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4. ON OTHER HAND IF THE NUMBER OF REFUGEES ON ST. JOHN'S ISLAND DOES NOT DECLINE STEADILY, THEN UNHCR REPS AGREED THAT GOS LIKELY TO RESUME A MORE RIGID POSTURE AND THERE MIGHT EVEN BE DANGER IT WOULD TAKE SOME ACTION TO EXPEL REFUGEES. EMBASSY CONCURS WITH UNHCR ANALYSIS AND BELIEVES GOS WILL TRY TO AVOID BEING TIED DOWN TO ANY SPECIFIC TIME PERIOD AND WILL CONTINUE TO ADJUST ITS POLICY TO SPECIFIC DEVELOPMENTS.

UNHCR HAS BEEN WELL REPRESENTED HERE, AND IN OUR OPINION SHOULD
CONTINUE TO TAKE THE LEAD IN DISCUSSIONS WITH GOS ON THIS SUB-
JECT IATF TEAM CAN USEFULLY SUPPORT
UNHCR REPRESENTATIONS IF IT COMES ARMED WITH SPECIFIC INFOR-
MATION ON EARLY MOVEMENT OF REFUGEES FROM SINGAPORE. THIS WOULD
LEND CREDIBILITY TO UNHCR/ REPRESENTATIONS.

5. RE QUESTIONS OF COORDINATION RAISED PARA 2B AND C, REF D,
WE SEE NO PROBLEM HERE. UNHCR AND ICEM REPRESENTATIVES IN
SINGAPORE HAVE DONE AN EXCELLENT JOB IN COORDINATING
WITH EMBASSIES OF THIRD COUNTRIES TO ENSURE THAT WE DO NOT
BRING TO U.S. REFUGEES WHICH OTHER COUNTRIES ARE PLANNING
TO RESETTLE. ICEM/UNHCR HAS ALSO TAKEN THE RE-
SPONSIBILITY FOR COORDINATING MOVEMENT AND RESETTLEMENT OF
REFUGEES TO THIRD COUNTRIES TO EXTENT REQUIRED.

6 REF D REFERS IN PARA 1 TO STATE 158799 WHICH NOT RECEIVED
HERE. WE HAVE ALSO NOT RECEIVED STATE 158811. REQUEST THESE
TWO MESSAGES BE REPEATED ASAP TO EMBASSY SINGAPORE.

GRANT

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Message Attributes

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